

HOWE'S  
HANDBOOK  
OF  
PARLIAMENT-  
ARY  
USAGE

Ashley W. Lindsay

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AND  
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NEW YORK

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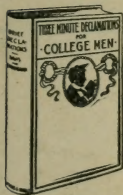
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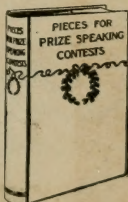
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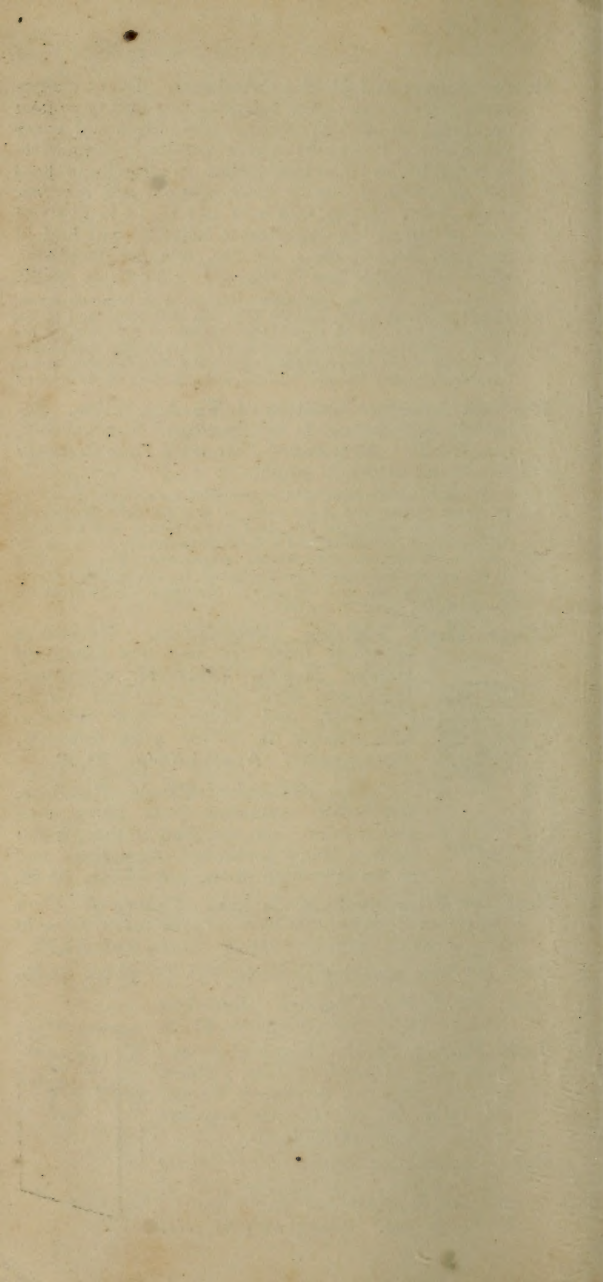
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# HOWE'S HANDBOOK

— OF —

## PARLIAMENTARY USAGE

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ARRANGED FOR THE INSTANT USE OF

LEGISLATIVE AND MASS MEETINGS,

CLUBS AND FRATERNAL ORDERS,

TEACHERS,

STUDENTS,

WORKINGMEN,

And all who desire to conduct themselves "decently and in order" in public assemblies.

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BY

FRANK WILLIAM HOWE

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HINDS & NOBLE, Publishers

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*Schoolbooks of all publishers at one store*

## INTRODUCTION.

Parliamentary law, like international law, is not a thing of statutory or arbitrary enactment, but is rather the outgrowth of deliberative procedure that originated centuries ago and has become gradually adapted to present requirements. Any community by common agreement might be a law unto itself in its rules of parliamentary procedure, but the weight and advantage of custom has gradually unified our American practise into the definite usages set forth in standard authorities like Palmer's and Cushing's "Manuals," and Robert's and Reed's "Rules." Each of these has achieved a marked improvement on its predecessors, by recording the more recent practise under a better arrangement of contents.

This little Hand-book does not assume to be a systematic treatise on the general subject, but does claim to have achieved a better arrangement of all the essential facts *for immediate use* than any other manual yet produced. It is both a primer for the beginner and an *instantaneous* and *reliable* guide for the experienced parliamentarian. It contains many original features (as on pp. 22, 29) in addition to its unique arrangement, and its convenient, inconspicuous size adapts it for the instantaneous use of inexperienced or occasional chairmen and speakers. Its paragraph references to Cushing, Robert, Reed, and Palmer enable every user to "study up his authority" *at leisure*, so as to maintain a firm because, authoritative, position on every point whenever challenged.

This revised edition has had the advantage of criticisms and suggestions by Mrs. A. S. Benjamin, National Superintendent Parliamentary Usage of the W. C. T. U., by Mrs. Emma A. Fox, Vice-President of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, and by other well-known teachers of the subject.

F. W. H.

## EXPLANATION.

With the manual open at the General Index, in the middle of the book, the reader has before him a table of all the motions in ordinary use, and in their general order of parliamentary precedence. This table occupies both halves of the book upward from the reference letter **I** on page 18 and the letter **V** on page 33. Below these letters, on each side, are other important matters of frequent use that do not belong to the Table of Motions.

It will be noted that the first half of the alphabet (**A-M**) is used for "bold-face" vertical letters of reference on the left-hand half of the book, while the remaining letters (**N-Z**) are used on the right. Any reference letter, wherever met in the body of the text, will thus point instantly to the first or last half of the book, according as it belongs, respectively, to the first or last half of the alphabet. An extension of this principle may be seen, for example, in opening the book at **B**. On this left-hand page the "Negative Status" of the motion "To Adjourn" is explained. On the opposite right-hand page, its "Positive Status" is set forth in order. This relative position of Positive and Negative holds throughout the book. The reference letter **B**, or any other with the *Italic* or forward slope, always points to the *right-hand* page in the *first* half of the book, and below its corresponding vertical letter. In the *last* half of the book—opening, for example, at **P**—the *left-hand* page is always indicated by the "back-slope" letter (**P**). Paragraphs and subdivisions are indicated throughout the book by attaching *Italic* "lower case" letters to the "bold-face" page-letters. Instantaneous reference is also assisted by the parenthetic use of the directions "above," "below," and "opposite." The entire system of cross-references is easily learned and highly satisfactory.



# A TO FIX TIME OF NEXT MEETING.

## Negative Status.

- a. Not debatable when another question is under consideration, and not subject to any subsidiary motion (**N-U**) except as indicated in **Ad** (opposite). No quorum required.
- b. Has no privilege as a main question (Robert 63), or when the time has already been fixed for the next regular meeting (Reed 171.) See **Ac** (opposite.)

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This is not a motion to adjourn, nor to fix the time of adjourning; but rather "to fix the time to which to adjourn."

**Form:** "I move that when this assembly adjourns, it adjourn to . . . . [set time]"; or, "to meet again at . . . . [set time]."

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## Parliamentary

A popular member and speaker is one who keeps quiet unless he has something new and important to say, who comes directly to the point, and stops when he has said enough. He does not antagonize unnecessarily; does not exhibit too much fervor, and yet is not prosy; is not too forward, but does not let proceedings drag for want of some one to offer or second motions when needed. He is not too exacting in having the rules enforced; does not disturb by whispering or any other breach of decorum; and while always in order himself, does not make too much of mere form, but does his part to make the progress of business smooth, rapid and satisfactory. The experienced parliamentarian always says or does the right thing at the right time and in the right way. Constant care as to *what*, *when* and *how*, is the sure secret of parliamentary success.



## Positive Status.

## A

- a. Takes precedence of all other motions except a motion for a recess (**B**) already pending (Reed 171).
- b. In order even after a vote to adjourn, if the result has not yet been announced by the chairman. (Robert 10; Palmer 179.)
- c. Is the main question (**V**) when no other is under consideration, or when the time has been already fixed, in the by-laws or otherwise, for the regular meeting after adjournment. See **Ab** (opposite).
- d. May be amended, but only by altering the time or place (or both) at which the meeting shall be held.

## Hints.

Don't speak oftener than you listen. Many men are killed for their much speaking.

Don't apologize for lack of preparation.

Don't be personal in referring to other members.

Don't say "I move you."

Don't lose your coolness of temper.

Don't "orate" by premeditation, unless you can do it as if without premeditation.

Don't pronounce pre-cēd'-ence as if it were "prēc'-e-dence."

Don't confuse the terms "meeting" and "session." (See 5, 6, pp. 52, 53.)

Don't forget that it always pays to consider the feelings of your fellow members.

Don't make the mistake of supposing that debate (see 15, p. 54) consists in abusing or ridiculing your opponent. It should be a dignified discussion, involving only the real merits of the question at issue.

## A TO FIX TIME OF NEXT MEETING.

## B TO ADJOURN. (Recess.)

### Negative Status.

- a. Not privileged when no time has been fixed for next meeting. (See **Bb**, opposite.)
  - b. Not debatable when privileged, and can not be reconsidered, amended, nor have any subsidiary motion (**N-U**) applied to it.
  - c. No quorum required for adoption. (12, p. 53.)
  - d. Does not destroy the effect of the previous question (**P**) already ordered, which order must be carried out as the first business of the next meeting. (Reed 125.)
  - e. This motion is *not* "always in order." It can not take a member from the floor, interrupt the verification of a vote (but see **Ba**, opposite), be entertained during a division, nor be renewed until some progress in business has been made. (Reed 169; Robert 11*d*.)
- 
- f. A motion to adjourn *sine die* is equivalent to a proposition to dissolve the assembly or close the session (see 6, p. 53), and kills all unfinished business.

In Committee, the proper motion is "to rise;" or, "to rise and report." (See 3, p. 49.)

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### Chairman's Title

The presiding officer of an occasional assembly is generally called the chairman or president. In legislative assemblies he is called the Speaker (originally the one who spoke for the king), and in religious councils he is most frequently termed the moderator.

The chairman should always be addressed, and refer to himself, by his proper title—"the Chair"—and not otherwise.

## TO LAY ON (or take from) THE TABLE. O

## Positive Status.

## B

- a. When unqualified, takes precedence of all motions except **A**, and is in order (Robert 11c) even after a vote has been taken but not yet announced or after **P** has been ordered. (Robert 20.) It is without privilege above any other motion when qualified (as **V**).
- b. Is debatable when there is no fixed time for next meeting, or when adjournment would constitute a dissolution of the assembly. (Reed 170.) See **Bf** (opposite.)
- c. Renewable, but only after some progress.

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**Recess.** When a regular meeting time has been fixed, a motion for a recess until that time has the same privilege as a motion to adjourn. When a recess has been ordered for a certain time a motion to adjourn adopted before that time carries the assembly to the next regular meeting. (Reed 174.) Under other circumstances a motion for a short recess has no precedence unless proposed as an urgent question of privilege (**C**). It yields to **A** and **B**. (Palmer 177.)

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## and Qualifications.

The chairman should be a man (or woman) of good presence, good voice, of decisiveness, and of good temper. He should have a ready knowledge of parliamentary usage, and the tact to use this knowledge in the best way. He should be impartial in judgment, and so conduct himself as to have the confidence of all the members of the assembly. In short, he should be the ablest person available.



**A** TO FIX TIME OF NEXT MEETING.

**B** TO ADJOURN. (Recess.)

**C** QUESTIONS OF PRIVILEGE.

**Negative Status.**

- a.* Final action need not be taken at once.
- b.* The Chair decides only whether the question is one of privilege,—not as to the particular action required. If the question is decided to be a question of privilege (either by the Chair, or by the assembly, on appeal), it has then acquired the character of a privileged motion (**Y***a*), but *a* (above) still applies.

Questions of Privilege must not be confounded with Privileged Questions; the latter term includes the former, but the former constitutes only a part of the latter. (See **Y***a*.)

**Form:** “I rise to a question of privilege.”

*Chairman:* “Please state your question.”

Decision follows (according to **C***b*, above).

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**Chairman's**

It is the duty of the chairman:—

To call the assembly to order at the appointed time.

To ascertain whether a quorum is present.

To have journal or minutes read and approved.

To announce the business in the proper order for consideration.

To entertain any motions regularly offered by members and put them to vote, if in order.

To ascertain and announce the vote on all questions (through tellers if so ordered. See **L**).

To decide all questions of order, subject to appeal. (See **E**.)

To preserve order and decorum in all business.

OBJECTION TO CONSIDERATION. N

TO LAY ON (or take from) THE TABLE. O

THE PREVIOUS QUESTION. P

Positive Status. C

- a. Take precedence of all other questions except **A** and **B**. Questions that affect the honor, dignity, or safety of the assembly are superior to those that concern only individuals.
- b. May interrupt a speaker if requiring immediate attention. But see **C**a, opposite.
- c. Are decided by the chair, subject to appeal. (See **C**b, opposite; also **E**.)
- d. May be disposed of by any subsidiary motion (**Y**c), which motion affects only the question of privilege, and not the main question (**V**).

**Examples:** *Of First Class*—Disorder in gallery, tampering with papers, bad heating or ventilation, etc. *Of Second Class*—Published charges, threats, personal attacks, etc.

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### Duties.

To enforce the observance of all rules of procedure, unless waived by common consent.

To nominate or appoint all members of committees that are not otherwise selected.

To answer—with or without preliminary discussion—all legitimate parliamentary inquiries (questions of information, **C**), and, when necessary, to state the parliamentary effect of proposed action. (See 8, p. 53.)

To sign and authenticate—with the secretary—all acts and orders of the assembly.

To designate a member (if there is no regular vice-chairman) to take the chair whenever it is vacated by himself. (But see last note p. 17.)

To be the general executive and representative.

**A** TO FIX TIME OF NEXT MEETING.

**B** TO ADJOURN. (Recess.)

**C** QUESTIONS OF PRIVILEGE.

**D** FOR ORDERS OF THE DAY.

**Negative Status.**

- a.* Does not require a second, and may be taken up by the Chair without a motion (but subject to **D<sub>c</sub>**, opposite).
- b.* Can not be debated.
- c.* Can not be amended.
- d.* Motion to take up part of the orders has no privilege.
- e.* If not taken up at the time specified, the order is lost. (See **D<sub>g</sub>**, opposite.)
- f.* One special order can not precede or interfere with another special order previously assigned (**D<sub>ef</sub>**, opposite). General orders can not interfere with established rules (**H**).
- g.* A call for the orders can not be renewed until the pending question is disposed of.

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“Orders of the day” is merely a phrase of convenience meaning the general order of business determined for the day. (See **D<sub>e</sub>**, opposite.) Generally the orders of the day are arranged by common consent; but must always be fixed by a motion (**D<sub>e</sub>**, opposite,) if objection is made.

**Form:** “I call for the orders of the day.”

*Chairman:* “If there is no objection, the orders of the day will now be taken up.”

If objection is made, the motion is put to vote. (See **D<sub>c</sub>**, opposite.) If lost, the regular order is postponed until the pending question is settled. (See *g*, above.)



**OBJECTION TO CONSIDERATION. N**

**TO LAY ON (or take from) THE TABLE. O**

**THE PREVIOUS QUESTION. P**

**TO POSTPONE TO A CERTAIN DAY. Q**

**Positive Status. D**

- a.* Takes precedence of every other motion except **A**, **B**, **C**, and to reconsider (**U**). But see *h* (below).
- b.* May be called for even when a member is speaking.
- c.* A general or special order may be postponed by a majority vote (Robert 13, 61); but two-thirds is required if the question of consideration (**N**) is raised—as it may be—against the order (Reed 257; Palmer 168.)
- d.* A special order requires two-thirds vote, and then takes precedence of any interfering general orders. (Robert 13.) Undebatable.
- e.* A subject may become an order of the day by common consent, by vote, by suspension of the rules (see *d*, above, and **Hb**), or by having been postponed to that day (**Qb**). But see *c* (above).
- f.* Orders of the day have priority of consideration in the order in which they were assigned; but each may be temporarily postponed (**Dg**, opposite, then applying) by a majority or two-thirds vote. (See *c*, above.)
- g.* If no hour is specified, the order holds for the entire day and every part of it until disposed of (Cushing 145).
- h.* To be privileged, the motion must be for the orders generally, and not for any particular one (Cushing 144; Robert 13).

**A** TO FIX TIME OF NEXT MEETING.

**B** TO ADJOURN. (Recess.)

**C** QUESTIONS OF PRIVILEGE.

**D** FOR ORDERS OF THE DAY.

**E** APPEAL (Questions of Order.)

Negative Status.

- a.* Not in order when another appeal is pending, nor after **B** has been moved—unless it is lost. (Robert, note under 11*c*; Palmer 156.)
  - b.* Not debatable if **P** is pending or ordered, if appeal relates only to decorum, to violation of the rules, or the order of business.
  - c.* Not debatable if made when any undebatable motion is pending.
  - d.* Can not be amended.
  - e.* If **O** or **P** is moved, it can affect only the appeal, and not the question originally pending.
- 
- f.* Reed holds (184, 185) that an appeal is always debatable if another appeal is not pending.
  - g.* One question of order, or an appeal upon it, may be interrupted by another point of order; in which case the latter point must be decided peremptorily by the Chair.

**Form:** “I rise to a point of order.” Or—“I call the speaker (member, or Chair,) to order.” (The member interrupted must take his seat until the point is decided.)

*Chairman:* “Please state your point of order.”

Chairman's ruling subject to **Ede** (opposite). If a speaker is ruled out of order he can not proceed in his remarks, if any one objects, unless a motion of permission is carried.

OBJECTION TO CONSIDERATION. N

TO LAY ON (or take from) THE TABLE. O

THE PREVIOUS QUESTION. P

TO POSTPONE TO A CERTAIN DAY. Q

TO REFER. (To Adopt.) R

Positive Status. E

- a. Takes precedence of the question which gave rise to it, and is in order even when a member has the floor; but yields to **A**, **B**, **C**, and **D**.
- b. May be laid on the table (**O**<sub>c</sub> not applying).
- c. May be disposed of by means of **P** if debatable. (See **E**<sub>b</sub>, and *f*, opposite.)
- d. A tie vote on an appeal sustains the decision of the Chair. (Three cases—Palmer 154, 155.)
- e. The Chair may vote (see p. 16) provided he is a member of the assembly (Reed 185).

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**Explanation:** The motions and rules listed above under **E** and **E** apply not directly to the question of order [that is, a question of procedure or priority], but to the *appeal* from the chairman's decision. When a question of order arises, or a member is called to order, the Chair immediately announces his decision on the point raised. Any dissatisfied member may appeal from this ruling, and if his appeal is seconded it must be put to vote and thus sustained, denied, or otherwise settled. The Chair may put the point to vote before an appeal.

During the pendency of a point of order, the Chair may receive advice from members; or state the reasons for his decision; but no one has the right to debate it. (Robert 14.)



**A TO FIX TIME OF NEXT MEETING.**

**B TO ADJOURN. (Recess.)**

**C QUESTIONS OF PRIVILEGE.**

**D FOR ORDERS OF THE DAY.**

**E APPEAL (Questions of Order.)**

**F FOR THE READING OF PAPERS.**

#### **Negative Status.**

- a.* Can not be debated.
- b.* Can not be amended.

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“A paper which is not the subject on which the assembly is to deliberate and act can only be read by unanimous consent, except as a part of the observations of a member in debate, and even then it must be subject to reasonable limitations.” (Reed 187.)

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#### **Organization of**

An occasional or mass meeting is usually called by a public notice for a certain time and place, setting forth the subject to be considered. At the appointed time, some one calls the meeting to order and proposes the election of a temporary chairman, and puts the necessary motions until the chairman is duly elected, usually by acclamation (see **L 1**, p. 24).

The chairman should be one who is well acquainted with the objects of the meeting and in sympathy with them. He assumes the chair, and the organization is then completed by the election of a secretary, and other officers if needed. The work of the meeting is usually embodied in a set of resolutions for adoption and publication.

**OBJECTION TO CONSIDERATION. N**

**TO LAY ON (or take from) THE TABLE. O**

**THE PREVIOUS QUESTION. P**

**TO POSTPONE TO A CERTAIN DAY. Q**

**TO REFER. (To Adopt.) R**

**TO AMEND. S**

**Positive Status. F**

- a.* Takes precedence of the question that gave rise to it, but yields to the privileged motions (**A-D**), and **N**.
  - b.* Every member has the right to have papers read before voting on them, if no objection is made. If objected to, the request can be granted only by vote. Motion for this purpose not subject to **S** nor to debate. (Robert 16.)
- 

### **a Mass Meeting.**

The mass meeting may result in a permanent organization to carry out the objects of its promoters. In this case, a committee is appointed to draft a constitution and by-laws, to be adopted at a later hearing. Such a constitution usually consists of several articles and subdivisions, on (1) name and object of the society, (2) qualifications of members, (3) officers' elections and duties, (4) meetings, and (5) amendments of constitution or by-laws.

The temporary president and secretary serve until the constitution is adopted and the permanent officers are regularly elected in accordance with its provisions.

In political conventions, the delegates' credentials constitute their right of membership.

- A** TO FIX TIME OF NEXT MEETING.
- B** TO ADJOURN. (Recess.)
- C** QUESTIONS OF PRIVILEGE.
- D** FOR ORDERS OF THE DAY.
- E** APPEAL (Questions of Order.)
- F** FOR THE READING OF PAPERS.
- G** TO WITHDRAW (or Renew) A MOTION.

#### Negative Status.

- a.* Can not be debated.
- b.* Can not be amended.

The rules stated above apply to the motion granting leave to *withdraw* an original motion. For *renewing* a motion see **G** (2), below.

When a motion has been withdrawn, the parliamentary situation is the same as if it had never been offered or discussed,—though sentiment may have been considerably affected. If a motion is withdrawn it carries with it any incidental (**E-H**) or subsidiary (**N-U**) motion raised by the question itself.

#### (2) Renewing a Motion.

##### Negative Status.

- c.* The main question (**V**) can not be renewed except by a motion to reconsider (**U**) or take from the table (**O2**); and if **U** has once been acted on, it can not be renewed on the same question, except in accordance with **Uc**. In general, no motion can be renewed unless the condition of affairs has materially changed or the limitation on **U** has elapsed. (See | 7.)



OBJECTION TO CONSIDERATION. N

TO LAY ON (or take from) THE TABLE. O

THE PREVIOUS QUESTION. P

TO POSTPONE TO A CERTAIN DAY. Q

TO REFER. (To Adopt.) R

TO AMEND. S

TO POSTPONE INDEFINITELY. T

Positive Status. G

- a. A motion may be withdrawn at any time before final action is reached, if no one objects; but **A**, **B**, **C**, and **D** are in order against it.
- b. If objection is made, leave to withdraw may be granted by a motion to that effect, and this motion is subject to **G***ab* (opposite).
- c. Cushing holds (161) that if leave to withdraw a motion is not clearly given by general consent, and the question is formally put, a unanimous vote is required. If this ruling is followed, the question may still be rejected (before debate) by means of **N**.

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Renewing a Motion. (2)

Positive Status.

- d. Any privileged motion (**A-C**)—note **D**, any incidental motion (**E-G**)—note **H**, and any subsidiary motion (**N-U**)—note **S**, may be renewed after progress in business has altered the former state of affairs. For example, if **O** has been offered and has failed, and **R** is now pending, it is again in order to move **O**. (Robert 26.)

- A** TO FIX TIME OF NEXT MEETING.
- B** TO ADJOURN. (Recess.)
- C** QUESTIONS OF PRIVILEGE.
- D** FOR ORDERS OF THE DAY.
- E** APPEAL (Questions of Order.)
- F** FOR THE READING OF PAPERS.
- G** TO WITHDRAW (or Renew) A MOTION.
- H** TO SUSPEND THE RULES.

#### Negative Status.

- a.* Can not be debated.
- b.* Can not have any subsidiary motion (**N-U**) applied to it.
- c.* Can not be reconsidered.
- d.* Can not be renewed for the same purpose as at first, unless at a later meeting. (Palmer 159.)

**Form:** "I move to suspend the rules which interfere with . . . . [specified item.]" (The motion to suspend is exhausted on the one purpose specified.)

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#### Chairman's Rights

The chairman may vote if by roll-call or by ballot, and in all cases when his vote would change the result. For example, he may vote to make a tie, break a tie, or in determining a two-thirds vote (Robert 40).

He may tacitly second a motion if no one else does, by stating it for consideration; always subject to **N** and **E**.

He may rise, without vacating his chair, and state his reasons for any ruling on a point of order, but must not debate it.

OBJECTION TO CONSIDERATION. N

TO LAY ON (or take from) THE TABLE. O

THE PREVIOUS QUESTION. P

TO POSTPONE TO A CERTAIN DAY. Q

TO REFER. (To Adopt.) R

TO AMEND. S

TO POSTPONE INDEFINITELY. T

TO RECONSIDER. U

Positive Status. H

- a. Takes precedence of the main question (V), and of all subsidiary motions (N-U), but yields to A, B, C, and D.
- b. Ordinarily requires at least two-thirds vote. (But see c, below.)
- c. The rules can be suspended only when they make provision for such suspension, and then only in accordance with such provision (Reed 191.) Reed holds (52) that rules may always be *amended* by majority vote. (See p. 30.)

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### and Restrictions.

The chairman should rarely leave the chair and engage in debate.

He should rarely put any motion referring only to himself, nor should he appoint any committees for action relating to himself.

He may always be relieved or removed from service by action of the regular assembly.

He can not appoint a chairman *pro tem.* to serve in his absence at a later meeting. Such chairman *pro tem.* must be elected, and for that occasion only. (Robert 40.)

- A** TO FIX TIME OF NEXT MEETING.
- B** TO ADJOURN. (Recess.)
- C** QUESTIONS OF PRIVILEGE.
- D** FOR ORDERS OF THE DAY.
- E** APPEAL (Questions of Order.)
- F** FOR THE READING OF PAPERS.
- G** TO WITHDRAW (or Renew) A MOTION.
- H** TO SUSPEND THE RULES.
- I** General Rules—Precedence.

The following motions—

- |                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| Positive Status. | 1. Are in order even though a member has the floor,— <b>D, E, N, U</b> .                               |
|                  | 2. Are in order after <b>B</b> not declared,— <b>A, U</b> .  |
|                  | 3. Must be in writing if requested,— <b>S, V</b> .   |
|                  | 4. Open the main question ( <b>V</b> ) to debate, — <b>R, T, U</b> a debatable question, <b>W</b> (2). |
|                  | 5. Generally require two-thirds vote,— <b>Dd, H, Jbc, N, P, W</b> (2).                                 |
| Negative.        | 6. Are subject to <b>P</b> without affecting original motion, <b>C, (E), Q, T, (U)</b> .               |
|                  | 7. May be renewed (in order),— <b>A-G, N, P-T, (U), W</b> .  |
|                  | 8. Require no second,— <b>D, N</b> . (Nominations.)  |
|                  | 9. Are not debatable,— <b>Aa, Bb, D, Eb, F, G, H, N, O, P</b> .  |
|                  | 10. Can not be amended,— <b>Bb, D-H, N, O, P, Sa, T, U</b> .   |
|                  | 11. Are not subject to any subsidiary ( <b>N-U</b> ) motion,— <b>Bb, H, N, O, P</b> .                  |
|                  | 12. Can not be reconsidered,— <b>H, Oc, U<sup>d-h, j</sup></b> .                                       |



OBJECTION TO CONSIDERATION. N

TO LAY ON (or take from) THE TABLE. O

THE PREVIOUS QUESTION. P

TO POSTPONE TO A CERTAIN DAY. Q

TO REFER. (To Adopt.) R

TO AMEND. S

TO POSTPONE INDEFINITELY. T

TO RECONSIDER. U

The Main Question. V

The Order of Precedence I

among the various motions is indicated, in general, by their relative position in the table open to view above I and V (pages 18 and 33.) In most of the United States legislatures it is the rule that when a question is under debate, no motion shall be entertained except—

To adjourn (B).

To lay on the table (O).

The previous question (P).

To postpone to a certain day (Q).

To refer to a committee (R).

To amend (S).

To postpone indefinitely (T).

—“Which several motions shall have precedence in the order in which they stand arranged.” (Reed 264.)

(There are variations from this order in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Washington, and Connecticut.)

- A** TO FIX TIME OF NEXT MEETING.
- B** TO ADJOURN. (Recess.)
- C** QUESTIONS OF PRIVILEGE.
- D** FOR ORDERS OF THE DAY.
- E** APPEAL (Questions of Order.)
- F** FOR THE READING OF PAPERS.
- G** TO WITHDRAW (or Renew) A MOTION.
- H** TO SUSPEND THE RULES.
- I** General Rules—Precedence.
- J** Debate—Order of Business.

The following motions are not debatable:

- A** To fix the time of next meeting—when another motion is pending.
- B** To adjourn (or recess), when unqualified.
- D** Orders of the day.
- E** An appeal, when **P** is pending, or when it is under the conditions stated in **E***bc*.
- F** Reading of papers.
- G** To withdraw a motion.
- H** To suspend the rules.
- N** Objection to consideration.
- O** To lay on the table.
- P** The previous question.

- a.* No one may speak more than twice in debate (*once* on a question of order) without leave.
- b.* A motion to close or limit debate should require two-thirds vote. (As **P**.)
- c.* A motion to extend the limits fixed for debate requires two-thirds vote, since it revokes a special order (**Dd**.)

OBJECTION TO CONSIDERATION.	N
TO LAY ON (or take from) THE TABLE.	O
THE PREVIOUS QUESTION.	P
TO POSTPONE TO A CERTAIN DAY.	Q
TO REFER. (To Adopt.)	R
TO AMEND.	S
TO POSTPONE INDEFINITELY.	T
TO RECONSIDER.	U
The Main Question.	V
To Rescind. (To Amend the Rules.)	W

### Order of Business.

J

Any assembly or society may determine arbitrarily in what order its items of business shall be transacted, and whether this order shall be fixed or variable from meeting to meeting; but the natural order of business in most deliberative bodies is as follows:—

1. Calling to order. (And roll call.)
2. Reading and approval of minutes.
3. Orders of the day (**D**), if any. (Reed 261.)
  - a. Special orders.
  - b. General orders.

Each ranked according to previous assignment. (**Def.**)
4. Unfinished business.
5. Reports of committees; (1) standing; (2) special.
6. New business. (Or 3, above.)
7. Adjournment.

- A** TO FIX TIME OF NEXT MEETING.
- B** TO ADJOURN. (Recess.)
- C** QUESTIONS OF PRIVILEGE.
- D** FOR ORDERS OF THE DAY.
- E** APPEAL (Questions of Order.)
- F** FOR THE READING OF PAPERS.
- G** TO WITHDRAW (or Renew) A MOTION.

**H** TO SUSPEND THE RULES.

**I** General Rules—Precedence.

**J** Debate—Order of Business.

**K** To Delay Action.

- a.* Raise **N** before debate.
- b.* Call **D**, if applicable.
- c.* Raise point of order (**E**), if applicable, followed by appeal and debate.

*d.* If this fails, try **T**.

*e.* If this fails, try **O**.

*f.* If this fails, try **S**.

*g.* If this fails, try **R**.

*h.* If this fails, try **Q**.

*i.* If this fails, try **P** if more than one third will vote against it. Then—

*j.* Try **B**, especially if “no quorum” is shown.

*k.* As a last resort, try **A**. (But see **Aa**.)

If all these fail—

*l.* Objectionable action may afterwards be corrected by **U** (note **Uf**), or **W**.

(See next p.)



OBJECTION TO CONSIDERATION.	N
TO LAY ON (or take from) THE TABLE.	O
THE PREVIOUS QUESTION.	P
TO POSTPONE TO A CERTAIN DAY.	Q
TO REFER. (To Adopt.)	R
TO AMEND.	S
TO POSTPONE INDEFINITELY.	T
TO RECONSIDER.	U
The Main Question.	V
To Rescind. (To Amend the Rules.)	W
To Promote Action.	X
Remarks.	K

These motions are all legitimate when a minority believe that unjust or ill-considered action will be taken; but this list of dilatory motions should rarely be followed to the bitter end. It is better to secure the adoption of **O** as early as possible, or if that fails, **B.** **E**, however, can be made at any point where the chairman's ruling appears unfair, and **P** can be moved on many minor motions, as well as on the main question, whenever there is a prospect of delaying action by prolonging debate. So long as a considerable minority desire further discussion, debate should generally be permitted to continue, if in order.

- A** TO FIX TIME OF NEXT MEETING.
- B** TO ADJOURN. (Recess.)
- C** QUESTIONS OF PRIVILEGE.
- D** FOR ORDERS OF THE DAY.
- E** APPEAL (Questions of Order.)
- F** FOR THE READING OF PAPERS.
- G** TO WITHDRAW (or Renew) A MOTION.
- H** TO SUSPEND THE RULES.
- I** General Rules—Precedence.
- J** Debate—Order of Business.
- K** To Delay Action.
- L** Methods of Voting.

There are five common methods of voting:—

1. By sound, or *viva voce*.
2. By show of hands.
3. By rising, or division.
4. By yeas and nays.
5. By ballot.

In the first method the chairman, after stating the question, says: "As many as are in favor of the motion, say *aye*"—[not "I"]. After the affirmative has thus responded, he continues: "As many as are opposed, say *no*." He then announces whether "the ayes have it" or the "noes." If his decision is questioned, any member may call for a verification (§, above), and **E** if refused.

OBJECTION TO CONSIDERATION.	N
TO LAY ON (or take from) THE TABLE.	O
THE PREVIOUS QUESTION.	P
TO POSTPONE TO A CERTAIN DAY.	Q
TO REFER. (To Adopt.)	R
TO AMEND.	S
TO POSTPONE INDEFINITELY.	T
TO RECONSIDER.	U
The Main Question.	V
To Rescind. (To Amend the Rules.)	W
To Promote Action.	X
Classes of Motions.	Y

The second method needs no explanation. L

In the third method, the chairman calls for each side to rise and be counted by the secretary and then decides accordingly. If his decision is disputed, the assembly may choose tellers to determine the vote.

In the fourth method, the list of members is read in alphabetical order, and each responds "Aye" or "No," and is so recorded or checked by the secretary. This vote is verified by recapitulating the ayes and noes as read by the secretary.

The fifth method is usual in elections. The ballots are collected and counted by tellers, who then announce the vote to the chair.

<b>A</b>	<b>TO FIX TIME OF NEXT MEETING.</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>TO ADJOURN. (Recess.)</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>QUESTIONS OF PRIVILEGE.</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>FOR ORDERS OF THE DAY.</b>
<b>E</b>	<b>APPEAL (Questions of Order.)</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>FOR THE READING OF PAPERS.</b>
<b>G</b>	<b>TO WITHDRAW (or Renew) A MOTION.</b>
<b>H</b>	<b>TO SUSPEND THE RULES.</b>
<b>I</b>	<b>General Rules—Precedence.</b>
<b>J</b>	<b>Debate—Order of Business.</b>
<b>K</b>	<b>To Delay Action.</b>
<b>L</b>	<b>Methods of Voting.</b>
<b>Y</b>	<b>Remarks.</b>

The motions as here arranged in the Table (above **I** and **V**), stand in their general order of precedence, reading from above downwards. It is impossible, however, to arrange any such scheme perfectly in all respects; as, for example, **U** is in order even after a vote on **B**. (See **Ua**.) But with such exceptions as this, the motions lower in the Table yield to those above, and those in the right-hand half of the Table yield to those on the left. The reasons for any exceptions to this are made clear in the discussion of each motion.



OBJECTION TO CONSIDERATION.	N
TO LAY ON (or take from) THE TABLE.	O
THE PREVIOUS QUESTION.	P
TO POSTPONE TO A CERTAIN DAY.	Q
TO REFER. (To Adopt.)	R
TO AMEND.	S
TO POSTPONE INDEFINITELY.	T
TO RECONSIDER.	U
The Main Question.	V
To Rescind. (To Amend the Rules.)	W
To Promote Action.	X
Classes of Motions.	Y

- a.* Privileged Motions (**A-D**) are those which on account of their immediate importance are entitled to precedence over all other motions.
- b.* Incidental Motions (**E-H**) are such as grow out of others, and so must be decided first.
- c.* Subsidiary Motions (**N-U**) are those that may be applied to other motions for the purpose of disposing of them in some way other than by immediate adoption or rejection.
- d.* The "main question," or Principal Motion (**V**) is one designed to bring before the consideration of the assembly any particular subject not included in *a*, *b*, and *c* (above).

- A** TO FIX TIME OF NEXT MEETING.
- B** TO ADJOURN. (Recess.)
- C** QUESTIONS OF PRIVILEGE.
- D** FOR ORDERS OF THE DAY.
- E** APPEAL (Questions of Order.)
- F** FOR THE READING OF PAPERS.
- G** TO WITHDRAW (or Renew) A MOTION.
- H** TO SUSPEND THE RULES.
- I** General Rules—Precedence.
- J** Debate—Order of Business.
- K** To Delay Action.
- X** Remarks.

Some of these motions (p. 29) can be effectively used by opponents; as **H** and **P**, whenever more than one third of the members can be mustered in opposition.

In general, every effort should be made to expedite business; but it is more justifiable to use parliamentary means in order to secure the rights of a minority than to over-ride them: Yet—

“The great purpose of all rules and forms is to subserve the will of the assembly rather than to restrain it; to facilitate, and not to obstruct, the expression of their deliberate sense.” (Cushing 315.)

OBJECTION TO CONSIDERATION.	N
TO LAY ON (or take from) THE TABLE.	O
THE PREVIOUS QUESTION.	P
TO POSTPONE TO A CERTAIN DAY.	Q
TO REFER. (To Adopt.)	R
TO AMEND.	S
TO POSTPONE INDEFINITELY.	T
TO RECONSIDER.	U
The Main Question.	V
To Rescind. (To Amend the Rules.)	W
To Promote Action.	X

- a.* Raise **C**, or **D**, if applicable.
- b.* **E**, if the Chair is dilatory or hostile.
- c.* **H**, or **P**, if the necessary two-thirds can be secured.
- d.* **R**, if debate is impeding action that would be favored by the committee.
- e.* **S**, if it will not impair the value of the action desired yet make it less objectionable to opponents. (Should usually be tried early.)
- f.* **G**, if better applicable than **S**.
- g.* **O**, if a majority can afterwards carry **O** (2) to better advantage.
- h.* **Q**, if this will secure a place in the orders of the day (**D**) under better conditions.
- i.* Finally, adverse action may be reconsidered (**U<sub>f</sub>**) or rescinded (**W**).

- A** TO FIX TIME OF NEXT MEETING.
- B** TO ADJOURN. (Recess.)
- C** QUESTIONS OF PRIVILEGE.
- D** FOR ORDERS OF THE DAY.
- E** APPEAL (Questions of Order.)
- F** FOR THE READING OF PAPERS.
- G** TO WITHDRAW (or Renew) A MOTION.
- H** TO SUSPEND THE RULES.
- I** General Rules—Precedence.
- J** Debate—Order of Business.

**W** Negative Status.

- a.* Not in order when the subject can be reached by **U**. (Robert 25; 27; Palmer 198.)
- b.* Can not be applied to action already taken that can not be reversed.

---

(2) To Amend the Rules.

Negative Status.

- c.* Can not be debated until time for final action.
- d.* Can not be amended before the last reading; but may then be adopted as amended without further notice (*d*, opposite, not applying).

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Concerning alteration of rules, Reed says (52),—"The assembly can not deprive itself of power to direct its method of doing business. It is like a man promising himself that he will not change his own mind."



OBJECTION TO CONSIDERATION. N

TO LAY ON (or take from) THE TABLE. O

THE PREVIOUS QUESTION. P

TO POSTPONE TO A CERTAIN DAY. Q

TO REFER. (To Adopt.) R

TO AMEND. S

TO POSTPONE INDEFINITELY. T

TO RECONSIDER. U

The Main Question. V

To Rescind. (To Amend the Rules.) W

Positive Status.

- a. Has no precedence or privilege above V or O(2).
- b. May be offered at any time when no other question is under consideration, but see W<sub>ab</sub> (opposite).

---

To Amend the Rules. (2)

Positive Status.

- c. Has no precedence or privilege above V or O(2).
- d. Must be in writing, and lie over a prescribed time before action can be taken.
- e. Requires two-thirds vote (but see H<sub>c</sub>).

f. When meetings are held only at long intervals, proposed amendments may be referred to a committee. Their report may be adopted at the next meeting without further notice.

- A** TO FIX TIME OF NEXT MEETING.
- B** TO ADJOURN. (Recess.)
- C** QUESTIONS OF PRIVILEGE.
- D** FOR ORDERS OF THE DAY.
- E** APPEAL (Questions of Order.)
- F** FOR THE READING OF PAPERS.
- G** TO WITHDRAW (or Renew) A MOTION.
- H** TO SUSPEND THE RULES.
- I** General Rules—Precedence.

**V** Negative Status.

- a.* Not in order if any other motion pending.  
Motion to divide it not subject to **J**, **S**, or **U**.
- b.* When once decided, with its amendments,  
this motion can not be taken up again except by  
a vote to reconsider (**U**). (Last clause p. 14.)

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**The Secretary.**

The recording officer of the assembly is called the clerk, recorder, recording secretary, or simply the secretary. He (or she) should have a good knowledge of parliamentary usage, a good voice and reading ability, and be able to write easily and concisely.

If he is a regular member of the assembly, he may engage in debate or other business; otherwise he may only answer questions of fact concerning the minutes or orders (**D**).

He may act also as treasurer or correspondent of the assembly, governed by its rules.

OBJECTION TO CONSIDERATION.	N
TO LAY ON (or take from) THE TABLE.	O
THE PREVIOUS QUESTION.	P
TO POSTPONE TO A CERTAIN DAY.	Q
TO REFER. (To Adopt.)	R
TO AMEND.	S
TO POSTPONE INDEFINITELY.	T
TO RECONSIDER.	U
The Main Question.	V

#### Positive Status.

- a. Takes precedence of nothing, and yields to everything except another principal motion offered later. (*Yd.*) May be divided, like **S**c.
- b. Should always be in writing if complicated, and must comport with the society's object.

---

#### His Duties.

It is the duty of the secretary—

To call the meeting to order in the absence of any presiding officer, and call for the election of a chairman *pro tem*. 33

To prepare and keep an accurate list of the members of the assembly, and

To have custody of the constitution, by-laws, rules of order, books of record, and of all other documents belonging to the assembly.

To keep a correct record of the nature and acts of each meeting. (See "Minutes," p. 37.)

(Cont. p. 36)

**A** TO FIX TIME OF NEXT MEETING.

**B** TO ADJOURN. (Recess.)

**C** QUESTIONS OF PRIVILEGE.

**D** FOR ORDERS OF THE DAY.

**E** APPEAL (Questions of Order.)

**F** FOR THE READING OF PAPERS.

**G** TO WITHDRAW (or Renew) A MOTION.

**H** TO SUSPEND THE RULES.

**U** Negative Status.

- a.* Can not be debated if the original question was undebatable (see **J**, and 9, p. 18); and if **P** was applied to **V** it does not affect it after **U**.
- b.* Can not be amended.
- c.* Can not be acted on when another question is pending. But see **Uab** (opposite).
- d.* Neither an affirmative nor negative vote to lay any question (including **U**) on the table can be reconsidered (see **Oc**); *i. e.*, if **U** be not *immediately* moved on such negative vote.
- e.* No question can be twice reconsidered, unless it was amended after the first reconsideration. (Robert 27; Palmer 197.)
- f.* **P** partly executed can not be reconsidered
- g.* Action that can not be reversed can not be reconsidered.
- h.* An amendment can not be reconsidered if incorporated in **V** except by reconsidering **V**.
- i.* If laid on the table, it (**U**) has no privilege when taken up later. (See also **Oc**.)
- j.* A vote electing to office a member present and not declining, can not be reconsidered (Robert 27). But the member may resign, and a new election be ordered.

**Form**: "I move that we reconsider the *vote* on  
. . . . [specified motion]."

OBJECTION TO CONSIDERATION. N

TO LAY ON (or take from) THE TABLE. O

THE PREVIOUS QUESTION. P

TO POSTPONE TO A CERTAIN DAY. Q

TO REFER. (To Adopt.) R

TO AMEND. S

TO POSTPONE INDEFINITELY. T

TO RECONSIDER. U

#### Positive Status.

- a. Is in order even after a vote on **B**, if not yet announced by the Chair; *i. e.*, for the purpose of being entered on the minutes; may interrupt a member on the floor. (Palmer 185.)
- b. After being recorded it may be called up whenever there is no other motion under consideration, and then takes precedence of everything except **A** and **B**. (Robert 27.)
- c. The reconsideration of a subsidiary motion (**N-T**) take precedence of the main question (**V**), but yields to all incidental (**E-H**) and privileged motions except **D**, (*i. e.* **A-C**).
- d. The reconsideration of an incidental (**E-H**) or subsidiary (**N-T**) motion must be acted on at once, unless the vote to be reconsidered had the effect of removing the whole subject (as an affirmative vote on **Q** or **T**). (Robert 27.) Motion for **U** suspends action till decided.
- e. May be applied to all [the] motions except itself (**U**), **B**, **H**, **O** or **O 2** (see **O c**) and **U j** (opposite).
- f. Requires only a majority vote, but must be moved by one who voted (unless by ballot) on the prevailing side of the original question, and at the same meeting or at a meeting on the next succeeding day. (Robert 27; Reed 205, 211.)



- A** TO FIX TIME OF NEXT MEETING.
- B** TO ADJOURN. (Recess.)
- C** QUESTIONS OF PRIVILEGE.
- D** FOR ORDERS OF THE DAY.
- E** APPEAL (Questions of Order.)
- F** FOR THE READING OF PAPERS.
- G** TO WITHDRAW (or Renew) A MOTION.

**T** Negative Status.

- a. Not subject to motions **N-T** except **P**.
- b. Can be applied only to the main question (**V**) and to **C**. (Robert 24.)
- c. From the peculiar nature of **S** and **T**, neither can be applied to the other, nor yields to the other; but **T** is in order when **S** has been carried, if the main question is still pending as amended. (Reed 164; Robert 59.)

---

**Secretary's Duties** (*Cont. from p. 33.*)

To provide the chairman with a statement of all business to be done at each meeting, and with lists of all existing committees.

To record all motions that are seconded, and to assist the chairman to keep the business in order. (See also **L**<sub>4</sub>, p. 25.)

To put to vote all motions not appropriate for the chairman to put.

To read all papers proposed to the assembly.

To furnish the chairman *pro tem.* of each committee a list of the other members, with instructions, if any, and subjects referred.

OBJECTION TO CONSIDERATION. N

TO LAY ON (or take from) THE TABLE. O

THE PREVIOUS QUESTION. P

TO POSTPONE TO A CERTAIN DAY. Q

TO REFER. (To Adopt.) R

TO AMEND. S

TO POSTPONE INDEFINITELY. T

#### Positive Status.

- a. Takes precedence of no motion but **V**, and yields to all except the main question (**V**) and **S**. (See **T<sub>c</sub>**, opposite.)
- b. Opens the main question to debate.
- c. Is subject to **P** without affecting other pending motions.
- d. May be applied to any main question (**V**) before or after amendments have been made thereon, and removes subject for the session.

---

#### Secretary's Minutes.

Should record every principal motion, whether carried or lost, unless otherwise ordered by action of the assembly. (Robert 41.)

Should include all resolutions and reports of committees, and convey a definite understanding of the nature and acts of the meeting.

Should never criticise, favorably or unfavorably, any action taken; nor digress upon the weather or other usual circumstances of the assembly.

Should be approved and signed by the chairman, before the secretary's signature.

**A** TO FIX TIME OF NEXT MEETING.

**B** TO ADJOURN. (Recess.)

**C** QUESTIONS OF PRIVILEGE.

**D** FOR ORDERS OF THE DAY.

**E** APPEAL (Questions of Order.)

**F** FOR THE READING OF PAPERS.

**S** Negative Status.

- a. An amendment to an amendment can not be amended. An amendment cannot be referred (**R**) without referring **V**.
- b. An amendment can not be renewed in the same form, except by a motion to reconsider (**U**), if objection is made.
- c. Two co-ordinate amendments can not be made at the same time; the first offered temporarily excludes the other. (Palmer 98.)
- d. These motions can not be amended:—
  1. To Adjourn, when unqualified (**Bb**).
  2. For the Orders of the Day (**D**).
  3. All Incidental Motions (**E-H**).
  4. Objection to consideration (**N**).
  5. To lay on the Table (**O**). (With **O2**.)
  6. For the Previous Question (**P**).
  7. An Amendment in the second degree (**S**<sup>a</sup>, above).
  8. To Postpone Indefinitely (**T**).
  9. To Reconsider (**U**).

---

**Form :** "I move to amend by—"

- (1) adding (or inserting) the words . . .
- (2) striking out the . . .
- (3) striking out . . . and inserting . . .
- (4) substituting the . . .
- (5) dividing the question. (Reed 151; Rob. 23e.)

OBJECTION TO CONSIDERATION. N

TO LAY ON (or take from) THE TABLE. O

THE PREVIOUS QUESTION. P

TO POSTPONE TO A CERTAIN DAY. Q

TO REFER. (To Adopt.) R

TO AMEND. S

### Positive Status.

- a. Takes precedence of only the main question (**V**), and yields to all privileged (**A-D**) and incidental (**E-H**) motions, and to the subsidiary motions **O-R**, and **U**; but it is not cut off by these motions. (Reed 201.)
- b. May be amended. (See *f*, below.)
- c. May be divided (if uncoherent), on motion to that end, even if **P** ordered. (Reed 193.)
- d. Should be in writing, if requested by the Chair, who decides its propriety—subject to **E**.
- e. An amendment may be inconsistent with the main question (**V**), or with action already taken, but it must be *germane* to the subject.
- f. If an amendment in the second degree (upon an original amendment) is pending, it must be decided first; then the vote is on the original amendment, and lastly on the original motion (**V**) as affected by any amendment carried.
- g. In filling blanks, precedence in voting is given to the largest sum, or the longest time proposed in the amendment. (Reed 154.)
- h. In amending by “striking out”—see (2) opposite—part of the words stricken out can not afterwards be reinserted, since that could have been done previously by amending the amendment. (Reed 136. But see Palmer 89, 90.)

**A** TO FIX TIME OF NEXT MEETING.

**B** TO ADJOURN. (Recess.)

**C** QUESTIONS OF PRIVILEGE.

**D** FOR ORDERS OF THE DAY.

**E** APPEAL (Questions of Order.)

**R** Negative Status.

*a.* Can not be applied to the subsidiary motions  
**N-T.** (Reed 164.) Subject only to **S** and **U**.

*b.* Committees for action (see also 4, p. 48) should be composed of those favorable to the action ordered; if for deliberation, all phases of the sentiment of the assembly should be represented.

*c.* Committees should usually consist of an odd number of members, and the member first appointed is chairman *pro tem*. The committee may elect its own chairman and secretary, except committee of the whole. (See pp. 48-51.)

---

(2) To Accept, Adopt, or  
Negative Status.

*d.* Has no precedence or privilege unless the time for consideration has been previously ordered. (See **De.**)

*e.* A minority report can not be considered except by a vote to substitute it for the majority report (see 6, p. 50). Such a motion to substitute opens the whole question to further consideration.

*f.* Members of a committee must not divulge proceedings in the committee before its report is rendered. Failure to observe this requirement may be censured or punished under **C**.



**OBJECTION TO CONSIDERATION. N**

**TO LAY ON (or take from) THE TABLE. O**

**THE PREVIOUS QUESTION. P**

**TO POSTPONE TO A CERTAIN DAY. Q**

**TO REFER. (To Adopt.) R**

**Positive Status.**

- a.* Takes precedence of a motion to amend (**S**), to postpone indefinitely (**T**), or the main question (**V**); but yields to all privileged (**A-D**) and incidental (**E-H**) motions, and to **O-Q**.
- b.* May be amended, by changing or instructing committee. (Reed 165; Robert 22.)
- c.* Opens main question (**T**) to debate, as to propriety of commitment, or on instructions. May lead to ordering **P** on **V**. (See **P<sup>b.</sup>**)
- d.* This motion may be qualified, without losing its rank, by specifying the number of members in the committee or the manner of appointment.

---

**To Approve a Report. (2)**

**Positive Status.**

- e.* Motion usually offered by the member presenting the report, but not necessarily (5, p. 50).
- f.* **N**, or other subsidiary (**N-U**) motions, may be used to delay action; and in general, the report of a committee may be treated like any main question (**V**) coming before the assembly.
- g.* Committee may be continued or discharged at the pleasure of the assembly, but the *adoption* of a final report discharges the committee without further action by the assembly (See 3, p. 50). So, too, if the report is rejected.

**A** TO FIX TIME OF NEXT MEETING.

**B** TO ADJOURN. (Recess.)

**C** QUESTIONS OF PRIVILEGE.

**D** FOR ORDERS OF THE DAY.

**Q** Negative Status.

- a. Can not be debated, except on the propriety of postponement, nor be applied to **N-T**.
  - b. The subject postponed becomes a special order (**De**) for the time fixed, and can not be taken up before except by two-thirds vote (**Dd**).
  - c. If a subject is postponed till the next meeting, the time of meeting should first be fixed by means of **A**, unless already determined.
- 

### **Rights and Duties of Members.**

The rights of each member of a public assembly are based upon his equality with every other member. As in civil government generally, the rights of each end where the rights of others begin. Every member has the right to demand that others shall be in order, but he must use this right in such a way as to be himself consistent with good order.

It is the duty of each member—

To maintain order and refrain from conversation during debate or other business.

To refrain from interrupting a “member speaking, except by his consent, and to avoid passing between the member and the chairman.”

To refrain from using any improper words or gestures in debate. (See 15, p. 54.)

To refrain from using even legitimate parliamentary motions for the purpose of creating discord or unreasonably impeding business.

In short,—

To conduct himself, and assist others, in such a way that the assembly may most readily carry forward its legitimate purposes.

OBJECTION TO CONSIDERATION.

N

TO LAY ON (or take from) THE TABLE.

O

THE PREVIOUS QUESTION.

P

TO POSTPONE TO A CERTAIN DAY.

Q

#### Positive Status.

- a. Takes precedence of a motion to refer (**R**), to amend (**S**), or to postpone indefinitely (**T**); but does not cut off **S**. (Reed 201.) It yields to motions **A-H** and also to **O** and **P**.
  - b. **P** applied to this does not affect other pending motions. (Robert 58.)
  - c. May be amended (**S**), but only by altering the time (like **Ad**).
- 

#### Election of Officers.

In order to secure secrecy of personal choice, the election of officers is usually done by ballot. The first ballot is sometimes considered informal and not decisive even though unanimous. The first vote is often scattering, and the process of balloting must be continued until a definite choice is reached by majority vote (see 14, p. 54). This procedure is had separately for each officer to be chosen. At any point the balloting may be declared formal, by a *viva voce* vote (see L 1, p. 24). Whenever the choice is likely to be unanimous for a particular person, the assembly may vote to instruct the secretary to cast the entire ballot of the society for him, if there is no objection.

Before balloting it is in order for any member to nominate candidates for the various offices, even though a nominating committee has been previously appointed for this duty. No nominations need be seconded; they stand on their own merits before the assembly. Nominating committees would better suggest more than one candidate for each office.

**A** TO FIX TIME OF NEXT MEETING.

**B** TO ADJOURN. (Recess.)

**C** QUESTIONS OF PRIVILEGE.

**P** Negative Status.

- a. Can not be debated.
- b. Can not be amended.
- c. Can not have any subsidiary (**N-U**) motion applied to it; nor to main question while it (**P**) is pending, except **O**. (**P** *f*, opposite.)

The "Previous Question" refers simply to the real question pending when this motion is offered. The object and effect of this motion is to stop debate and bring to immediate vote any motion affected by it.

**Form:** "I call for [or move] the previous question."

*Chairman:* "Shall the question be now put?"

An affirmative two-thirds vote (**P** *d*, opposite) brings to vote the last question pending, which may be an amendment (**S**); a motion to refer (**R**); to postpone (**Q** or **T**); the main question (**V**); or one of the motions **A**, **B**, or **E**, when debatable. If several connected motions are pending, the previous question—unless expressly limited by the mover (**P** *e*)—is exhausted on each in turn, in reverse order, beginning with the last. (Palmer 65.)

In American practise an affirmative two-thirds vote on this motion closes debate and brings the pending question to an immediate vote. In England, this motion is offered by the *opponents* of the pending question, who vote in the negative; and if **P** is lost, the main question is suppressed indefinitely. In America, if **P** is lost, the debate on the pending question continues until it is disposed of.

TO LAY ON (or take from) THE TABLE. O

THE PREVIOUS QUESTION. P

## Positive Status.

- a. Takes precedence of all debatable questions (**B**<sub>b</sub>, **E**<sub>f</sub>, **V**), and of all other subsidiary motions (**Q-U**) below its own rank: but it does not cut off **S**. (Reed 201.)
- b. All privileged (**A-D**) and incidental (**E-H**) motions, and also **O**, are in order while **P** is pending. It may be *applied* to all debatable questions except **R**, which is reached first, if pending, through **V**. (Robert 58.)
- c. A member may offer a resolution and move the previous question on it at the same time. (Robert 20); but Cushing (199) strongly disapproves this practise.
- d. Requires two-thirds vote.
- e. May be confined in its effect to an amendment (**S**) or to an amendment of the original amendment (**S**<sub>f</sub>), if so specified, and is always so limited when applied to the motion to postpone (**Q** or **T**), to **E**, and **U**. (Robert 58.)
- f. The main question (**V**) may be laid on the table (**O**<sub>e</sub>) while **P** is pending. (Robert 19.)
- g. Reed holds (163) that the motions for the previous question, to postpone to a definite time (**Q**), to refer (**R**), and to postpone indefinitely (**T**), are all of equal rank; so that "the first one moved must be the first one one disposed of before either [any] of the others will be in order." But he agrees (264-268) that the general tendency is, and ought to be, to grade these motions (**P**, **Q**, **R**, and **T**) according to the order followed in this Table.



## **A** TO FIX TIME OF NEXT MEETING.

## **B** TO ADJOURN. (Recess.)

### **O** Negative Status.

- a.* Can not be debated; nor applied in case **Nd**.
- b.* Can not have any other subsidiary motion (**N, P-U**) applied to it.
- c.* Neither affirmative nor negative vote can be reconsidered (See also **Ud**); since the former may be more directly reached by **O** (2), and the latter by **G** (2). (See Reed 204.)
- d.* The object of this motion is to postpone the subject temporarily (not **Q** or **T**) until it may be taken up by a majority vote. In practise, this motion often serves to postpone indefinitely (**T**). Not applied to **O**2. (Palmer 133.)
- e.* This motion can not be qualified without becoming a motion to postpone definitely or indefinitely (**Q, T**), in which case it can not be again taken up (before the time) except by a vote to reconsider (**U**).
- f.* Upon **O**<sub>c</sub> (opposite), Reed (114) remarks: "You can not go on with an amendment when the main question is no longer before the house, and can not go on with the main question when there exist amendments liable to be called up at the pleasure of the house."

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### (2) To Take from the Table.

#### Negative Status.

- g.* Can not be debated.
- h.* Can not have any subsidiary motion (**N-U**) applied to it. (Robert 19.)
- i.* As this motion has no privilege, it can be offered only when there is no other motion before the assembly. However, any question not indefinitely postponed (**T**) or lost, retains a certain practical advantage on the table.

## TO LAY ON (or take from) THE TABLE. O

## Positive Status.

- a. Takes precedence of the main question (**V**), of the motion to reconsider (**U**), and of all the other subsidiary motions (**P-T**). See also *e* (below). It yields, however, to all the motions which precede it (**A-N**) in the Table; but may be *applied* to **C**, **E**, **S**, **U**, and **V**.
- b. Removes the subject until taken from the table (**O2**, below.)
- c. Takes everything with it except in the case of a question of privilege (**C**), an appeal (**Ee**), to reconsider (**U**), and to amend the minutes (p. 37). See also **O f** (opposite).
- d. May be renewed after an amendment. See **G (2) d**.

- 
- e. "Even after the ordering of the previous question, up to the moment of taking the last vote under it, it is in order to lay upon the table the question still before the assembly." (Robert 19.)

**Form:** "I move to lay the question on the table;" or, "that it be laid on the table;" or, "that the question lie on the table."

If carried, *b* (above) is accomplished.

## To Take from the Table.

(2)

## Positive Status.

- e. Takes precedence of no other motion, and is, in fact, a main question (**V**); but see limitations in **O (2) gh** (opposite.)
- d. When a question previously laid upon the table is again taken up, it comes before the assembly precisely as it was in its previous condition, with all the amendments pending; but no other subsidiary motion is revived.

## A TO FIX TIME OF NEXT MEETING.

### N Negative Status.

- a. Requires no second.
- b. Can not be debated.
- c. Not subject to any subsidiary motion (**O-T**)
- d. If lost, **O** cannot be applied. (Palmer 133.)

---

**Form:** "I object to the consideration of that question;" or, "On that I raise the question of consideration."

*Chairman:* "Shall the question be now considered?"

If decided adversely (See **Nc**, opposite), the subject is dismissed for the current meeting. The Chair may himself raise the question of consideration. (Palmer 45.)

---

### Committees.

1. An executive committee is a standing committee usually including the permanent officers of the society.
2. Joint and conference committees are special committees appointed to facilitate action between co-ordinate deliberative bodies, as the two branches of Congress.
3. Members of committees may be selected by appointment of the Chair, by resolution, by nomination and vote, or by ballot. If the number is unsettled, the vote must be on the highest number proposed, and then down until the exact number preferred is reached.
4. The first member chosen is the chairman *pro tem.* of the committee; but if all are chosen by ballot, the committee elects its own chairman. Committees for action should be small; for deliberation, large. (See **Rb**, p. 40.)
5. The committee chooses its own secretary, except committee of the whole, whose secretary is the clerk of the assembly (Reed 88.)

## Positive Status.

- a. Applies only to the main question (**V**) and **D** (See **D f**), and is in order even when a member has the floor, but only when the main question is first introduced and before debate.
- b. **A**, **B**, and **C** have precedence over this motion (**N**), and (with **D** when applicable) may be used instead of it.
- c. Requires two-thirds vote in the negative.

---

The reason for classifying this as a subsidiary motion (**Y c**) is that it is always used *to dispose of* some other motion, and so is more than merely an incidental motion. This classification is supported by Reed (163).

---

## Committee Meetings.

1. It is the duty of the chairman to call the meetings of the committee, if the time has not been otherwise fixed ; but if he refuses or neglects to do so, any two members may call a meeting by serving notice on the other members.
2. Unless the assembly directs otherwise, a majority of the committee constitutes a quorum for transacting business.
3. A committee may adjourn from time to time until its work is completed ; but its final action should not be "to adjourn," but "to rise and report." (See note under **B f**, p. 4.) This motion in committee is subject to the same rules and privileges as the motion to adjourn.
4. The procedure in committee is less formal than in the full assembly; but action must always be taken on motion or by unanimous consent.
5. All action finally reported from the committee must have been agreed to in a regular meeting of the committee.

## Reports of Committees.

1. If a bill, or paper has been submitted to a committee for action, the committee must not make any erasures or modifications in it, but may only suggest amendments on other sheets of paper, returning the original in the same condition in which it was received.
2. When the work assigned to a committee is completed, their final report must be signed by the hands of all the members agreeing thereto. A minority, not agreeing, may present a different report. (See 6, below).
3. A report is considered in the assembly through a motion to "accept" (p. 40), "adopt," or "agree to" the report. If the report is complete and final, it is unnecessary and improper to move "that the committee be discharged." This motion should not be offered unless the assembly is dissatisfied with perverse or neglected work by the committee. (See *g*, p. 41.) The assembly cannot alter any statement of facts reported by a committee or officer.
4. A motion "to receive" a report is not equivalent to "adopting" it, and is not in order when the report is a part of the orders of the day (**D**, pp. 8, 9). However, a motion "to receive" a report (before it is read) must be carried if any one "objects to its consideration." (See **N**, pp. 48, 49.)
5. The motion "to adopt" is properly made by the committee chairman (or member) who presents the report. (**R***e*, p. 41.)
6. A minority of a committee may tender a separate report; but the assembly can consider it only through a motion to substitute it for the report of the majority. (*e*, p. 40.)
7. A report is usually re-read by the secretary of the assembly, considered by items or sections, and adopted or rejected by a final vote after amendments, if any, have been agreed to.



## Committee of the Whole

1. is the entire assembly conducting itself as a committee, always with some other member than the regular president in the chair. This method of consideration is agreed to on a motion "that the assembly now go [or resolve itself] into a committee of the whole house to consider . . . [the specified subject]." This motion is in all respects like a motion "to refer." (**R**, pp. 40, 41.) (Palmer, 115-117.)
2. While in committee of the whole the only allowable motions are "to amend" (**S**, pp. 38, 39), "to adopt" (**R2**, pp. 40, 41), and "to rise and report" (**3**, p. 49.) Consequently, no motions are in order that would close debate or postpone consideration (though propositions of this nature might be agreed to in the committee by common consent). Consideration can be limited only by action taken in the assembly before going into committee of the whole. Any incidental question (**E-H**, pp. 10-17) which the committee can not settle by common consent, should be immediately reported to the regular assembly by the rising of the committee of the whole. (Also **4**, below.) (Palmer, 200, 201.)
3. The "yeas and nays" (**L4**, pp. 24, 25) can not be ordered in committee of the whole, so that the voting of members is not recorded; and nothing is recorded except what is formally reported (by the chairman *pro tem.*) from the committee of the whole to the assembly. (The clerk of the assembly serves as secretary *pro tem.* for the committee of the whole. See **5**, p. 48,) The "quorum" (see **12**, p. 53) is numerically equal to that of the assembly.
4. In committee of the whole any member may speak as often as he can get the floor; but if the committee becomes disorderly the regular chairman of the assembly should resume his place and declare the committee of the whole dissolved.

## Parliamentary Terms Defined.

There are certain technical terms peculiar to parliamentary practise that should always be clearly distinguished. Most of these convey their meaning quite plainly; but for the sake of accuracy and completeness, an epitomized definition of each is here given.

1. "The house" is the whole body of members present in any assembly, society, or congregation.
2. "The floor" is the right to speak to the whole house. The member who wishes to secure it must rise and address himself to the Chair, as, "Mr. Chairman," [President, or Speaker, as the particular title may be.] He is "recognized" by being named, or otherwise designated by the chairman, and may then address the house. When two members address the Chair at the same instant, the preference should usually be given to the one opposed to the views of the last speaker; but the chairman's choice may be over-ruled by an appeal (**E**, p. 10). If a member "yields the floor" to another, he can not regain it without the consent of the house. But one does not lose his rights by yielding for an interrogation, nor (if expressly reserved at the time) for a motion to adjourn, a recess, or to rise from committee of the whole; he is entitled to resume the subject at the next opportunity. (Reed 217.)
3. "The Chair" is the presiding officer. To "take the chair" is to assume the president's duties.
4. The "table" is literally the clerk's desk. Practically, it is the docket or place of deposit for all business that is not immediately under the consideration of the house, or in the hands of some committee. (See **O***b*, p. 47.)
5. A "meeting" is one sitting of the assembly, which may be interrupted by a recess (see **B**

## Definitions (*Cont.*)

- p. 4) but not by an adjournment, which closes the meeting.
6. A "session" is a series of several connected meetings constituting a term, as of a legislature or periodic convention.
  7. A "question" is a subject (not necessarily an interrogation) for consideration by the assembly; when under consideration it must always take the form of a "motion" to be decided by vote, unless agreed to by unanimous consent.
  8. A "parliamentary inquiry" is a privileged (*Y a*) interrogation, addressed to the Chair, as to the parliamentary effect or status of a certain proposed action. The Chair should answer it to the best of his ability, or may call upon some member to give the desired information. If the decision takes the form of a ruling by the Chair, it may become the basis for an appeal (*E*, p. 10.)
  9. A "resolution" is a statement of action, proposed action, or opinion, expressing the sense of the assembly in the form of one or more preambles and conclusions.
  10. An "order" is an action in the form of a direction or command.
  11. A "vote" is the final action taken on an appeal, motion, resolution, or order. (See *L*, p. 24.)
  12. A "quorum" is a sufficient number of members to legitimately transact business. The number is usually fixed by the rules [by-laws, or constitution] of the assembly; if not otherwise specified, it is always a majority of the membership belonging to the organization. A "present quorum" and not a "voting quorum" is all that is necessary for business (*Reed 15*). Business may be tacitly carried on without a quorum, but whenever it becomes apparent—as by a point of order (*E*) or in a

## Definitions (*Cont.*)

division (**L**3)—that a quorum is not present, the assembly must immediately adjourn. (Cushing 19, 249.)

13. A “majority” is more than one half of the members acting. An officer elected by majority vote has received more votes than the combined vote for all other candidates for the office.

14. A “plurality” refers to the excess of the leading candidate’s vote over that of his chief opponent. Any provision that the one receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared elected, bases the decision on a “plurality” rather than “majority” vote. (See 13, above). Robert holds (38) that no one can be elected by a “plurality” vote except in accordance with some special rule previously adopted; and Cushing holds (26) that officers should always be elected by majority vote, as otherwise they “might be instantly removed, on a question made for that purpose, by the votes of those who had voted for other persons on the election.”

15. “Debate” is the parliamentary name given to that process of orderly discussion by which an assembly arrives at an expression of its own general will. A debate is not necessarily a dispute or controversy, and “no member is at liberty to digress from the matter of the question, to fall upon the person of another, and to speak reviling, nipping, or unmannerly words of or to him” (Cushing 211). No member may speak twice in debate until all others have had the opportunity to speak once; but the member who introduces a resolution or report has the right to close its discussion, even though the previous question (**P**, p. 45) has been ordered.



40

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